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New York

President	Mr. Hasmy	(Malaysia)
Members	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Duval
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Mali	Mr. Issouf Oumar Maiga
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. Hamer
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Tunisia	Mr. Chaouachi
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Minton

Agenda

The situation in East Timor

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00-62417 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in East Timor

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Brazil, Indonesia, New Zealand and Norway, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Ms. Wensley (Australia), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia), Mr. Powles (New Zealand) and Mr. Brattskar (Norway) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At the outset, I should like on behalf of the Council to express profound condolences to the Governments and the peoples of Bangladesh and of Nepal, as well as to the bereaved families, in connection with the deaths of two of their soldiers, who gave their lives in the cause of peace while serving with the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor.

I give the floor to the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hédi Annabi, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure.

Mr. Annabi: Since the last report of the Secretary-General, which was submitted to the Council on 26 July, and since our last briefing on 28 July, there have been a number of developments in East Timor on which I would like to report.

I will cover successively the security situation, the situation of refugees in West Timor, issues related to governance and public administration, as well as recent political activity in East Timor.

During the last month, the security situation in East Timor has deteriorated. It has been marked by a series of militia-related incidents since the killing on 24 July of a soldier from the New Zealand contingent of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). There has been an increase in confirmed reports of militia activity and movements in the Central and Western sectors of East Timor. The Council has been informed of the incident of 2 August north of Maliana in the Bobonaro District in which a small group of well-armed men exchanged fire with the UNTAET troops. Two suspected militia were killed in that incident and both were dressed in the uniform of the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI) and were equipped with SKS rifles. A similar incident occurred on 6 August, near Batugade in the Bobonaro District, which resulted in the wounding of at least one militia. On 10 August, in the most serious incident to date, approximately 20 militia attacked a Nepalese platoon of UNTAET, which is serving as part of the New Zealand battalion. The attack took place in Cova Lima, and resulted in the death of a Nepalese soldier and the wounding of three others. On 17 August, a patrol of Fiji troops also exchanged fire with a group of suspected militia, in the area between Suai and the West Timor border and in fact another incident took place last night in the course of which Australian members of UNTAET exchanged fire with suspected militia north-east of Maliana but initial reports seem to indicate that there were no casualties.

Since the peacekeeping force assumed responsibility from the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) on 23 February, militia activity had been restricted to the districts of Ermera, Bobonaro, Cova Lima and the Oecussi enclave. However, it has become evident over the past month that militia elements are now also operating in the

districts of Ainaro, Manufahi, and, possibly, in Aileu, Dili and Liquica. UNTAET reports there may now be 60 to 120 militia in at least eight groups operating in East Timor. These groups have recently shown a degree of operational effectiveness and a greater willingness to engage UNTAET peacekeeping troops. Their level of activity within East Timor is reflective of a degree of coordination and preparation that had not been seen thus far.

The militia's objectives remain difficult to assess at this time. However, overall, it is felt that it is their intent to continue a pattern of violence against the civilian population and UNTAET in order to try to undermine the transition process. In the worst case, which we hope will not occur but for which we need to prepare, they may be attempting to destabilize East Timor through offensive guerrilla-style operations, to discredit UNTAET and create doubts among the East Timorese about its effectiveness and they may also be attempting to undermine the ability of the peacekeeping force to maintain security by inflicting casualties at every opportunity.

The militia pose a demonstrable threat to peace and security in East Timor and UNTAET has taken action to respond to this threat and, as a first step, has redeployed a company from Manatuto in Sector East to Dili in Sector Central. This has relieved other UNTAET troops in Sector Central from static protection tasks and enhanced UNTAET's ability to quickly respond to additional security incidents in Dili or elsewhere in the Sector Central, should the need arise. At the same time, another company from Sector East has been placed on six hours' notice to move and provide support in Sector West as well as in the Central Sector and Oecussi if needed.

After a review of the security situation, the Force Commander of UNTAET and the Special Representative, Mr. Vieira de Mello, have concluded that it is essential to maintain the current force level to counter the threat posed by militia activities. Accordingly, implementation of the previously announced plan to downsize the number of troops in the eastern Sector of East Timor to a battalion size force of 500 — in other words, a downsizing from 1850 to a battalion size of 500 troops by the end of January 2001 — will be delayed. The current strength in East Timor, up to the initial downsizing, stands at 1,636. We will keep the situation under review and inform the Council of any further adjustments that may be required to the level of the force and to its *modus operandi*.

Official contacts and cooperation between UNTAET and the TNI continue to be good, and information on militia personnel and activities is exchanged via the Tactical Coordination Working Group. However, the events of the past month again raise serious concerns regarding the capacity or willingness of the TNI — or least some elements within the TNI — to prevent militia activity in West Timor and across the border into East Timor, and to take the measures which are urgently required to ensure the security of refugees in West Timor.

The current security situation has served to reinforce the determination of the East Timorese leadership to establish a national security force. UNTAET and the East Timorese leadership are closely studying the report on security force options, which has been prepared by the London King's College team. Three options were presented in the report, all of which foresee the former Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (FALINTIL) as the nucleus of the future defence force. Under the first option, a force of up to 5,000 troops, based on former FALINTIL and recruitment of additional personnel through conscription, would be established. It would include a small body of specialized troops to deal with civil disturbances and a modest air-and-sea component. Under the second option, a force of 3,000 would comprise 1,500 regular forces and 1,500 conscripts who would serve for one year. Finally, the third option would lead to the establishment of a force of about 3,000, half of which would be former FALINTIL soldiers, and the remaining 1,500 would be volunteer reservists. All troops would be trained to deal with civil disturbances. For economic reasons the study favoured the third option. We will, of course, keep the Council informed, as the process of discussion of these options with the East Timorese and other interested parties unfolds.

Turning now to the refugee situation in West Timor, I would like to say that, concurrent with the rise in militia activity, which I have just described, the situation of the refugees in West Timor has steadily deteriorated. Militias are openly active in the camps and large parts of the border areas. They have erected roadblocks in the area, including on the main road between Atambua and Batugade. Since the first week of August, there have been almost no land returns to

East Timor, and family reunion meetings at the border have been suspended. There has also been an escalation in violence and attacks on humanitarian workers. In Atambua, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) compound was targeted during a 12 August demonstration by the Aitarak militia, without intercession by the TNI or police. Subsequently, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the IOM and a non-governmental organization relocated most of their staff to Kupang. On 22 August, militia attacked and seriously injured three UNHCR staff delivering humanitarian assistance to a refugee camp in Naen, in the vicinity of Oecussi, which had not so far suffered from security problems. It is worth noting in this connection that it took over two hours for the security forces to arrive at the scene. Humanitarian agencies are seriously concerned about these developments and feel that the militias may be looking to force a suspension of international humanitarian assistance to the refugees. Indeed, following the 22 August incident, UNHCR initially suspended its operations in West Timor, but I understand that it has now decided to resume operations, since it is satisfied with the way the Indonesian authorities have dealt with this very regrettable incident. Two suspects have been arrested by the Indonesian authorities and will be charged in court. The Government of Indonesia has also issued a strong condemnation of these acts of violence against humanitarian workers and taken practical steps on the ground to increase the presence of security forces in and around the camps.

Earlier this month, Indonesian Foreign Minister Shihab announced that the Government of Indonesia planned to find a solution to the present impasse on the refugee situation. An important delegation from the Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs, headed by Mr. Hassan Wirajuda, the Director General for Political Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, visited Dili on 23 August. During the extensive discussions that were held on that occasion, Mr. Vieira de Mello urged the Indonesian Government to take the necessary steps in cooperation with the United Nations to address the deteriorating security situation in West Timor and to create conditions under which voluntary repatriation of the refugees in West Timor can take place hopefully within a period of three to six months. UNHCR will continue to work with refugee leaders to better inform refugees as to the situation in East Timor and to encourage returns.

Turning now to governance and public administration, I would like to say that the new East Timor Transitional Administration is now well under way. The Cabinet has now met five times and has taken decisions on a wide range of policies, including the reconstruction of public buildings and the preparation of an administrative and legal framework for future taxes in East Timor. This framework will serve as an important foundation for the establishment of sustainable financial administration in East Timor.

Since 1 July, the East Timor Consolidated Budget has been administered and executed separately from that of UNTAET. The customs and duties collected to date by the Border Service represent a total of over $3 million. On 15 August, the East Timor Revenue Service also began to collect tax revenues.

There has also been progress in the building up of the civil service, with the recruitment of East Timorese increasing rapidly following the approval of the East Timor Consolidated Budget for the fiscal year 2000/2001. So far, the civil service has appointed 111 East Timorese candidates for positions in the departments and offices of the East Timor Transitional Administration. Of these, 80 were selected for the Central Fiscal Authority and 22 for the Central Payments Office.

While economic and social conditions remain of great concern throughout East Timor, and will continue to do so for some time to come, there has been a noticeable easing of employment pressures and an encouraging rise in economic activity, especially in Dili. The number of registered private businesses has risen by 418 to 3,114, the great majority of these being Timorese. Over the last two months, an additional 83 quick impact Projects have created 3,450 jobs for a six-month period. The Temporary Employment Projects are now in their final stages, having provided a total of over 33,780 jobs for the Timorese. There are also positive reports that the Temporary Employment Projects schemes have lead to the development of economic ventures, for example in the Liquica district where funds have been reinvested to start handicraft and other small businesses. There has also been a gradual increase in foreign investment proposals in the areas of tourism, hotel construction, banking, fisheries and animal farming.

Following the successful deployment of the first group of 50 East Timorese police officers, a second

group of 50 is undergoing training at the academy through mid-October. At this rate, however, it will take about five years before we can reach the target of 3,000 East Timorese police. UNTAET has developed a proposal to increase academy output to 130 graduates per month. However, this would require additional voluntary contributions to the budget of the Transitional Administration.

In general, civil law and order remain stable, although civilian police continue to report an upward trend in low-level crime and petty theft. On 3 August, the internationally recruited General Prosecutor for East Timor assumed his post. The Special Crimes Unit has prioritized cases related to crimes committed in 1999. Currently, 75 detainees are in custody for crimes committed last year, including arson, rape and murder. UNTAET and the Government of Indonesia are closely cooperating on investigations into the events of last year. A team of 23 Indonesian investigators visited East Timor last month to interview witnesses and visit crime scenes.

In the health sector, the transition from the emergency phase to a more systematic approach to long-term health delivery has begun. Public health services have also been available locally in the Liquica district since the beginning of this month.

In the field of education, so far a total of 3,000 primary teachers have been selected and appointed to district schools, and 1,750 secondary school teachers are in the process of being appointed. A national teachers' congress, attended by over 800 teachers, was held from 10 to 12 August and addressed issues including the national curriculum and the school calendar.

In the agricultural field, district agriculture officers are working with East Timorese farmers in 10 of the 13 districts on an important soil enrichment programme to enable farmers to grow a second crop, given sufficient rainfall. This month, the World Bank also launched an agriculture rehabilitation project.

The rehabilitation and maintenance of East Timor's infrastructure — in particular of its damaged roads — is continuing, with Timorese engineers supervising most of the projects. However, security concerns have resulted in a delay in road repairs in the western sector.

Efforts at human resource capacity-building are also continuing. A group of 50 East Timorese are completing the final phase of a diplomatic training course. The Civil Service Academy has also been conducting English language courses for Timorese civil servants. In addition, 75 senior East Timorese managers underwent a one-week course in management organized by the National Institute of Public Administration of Portugal.

Timorese district advisory councils were formally appointed by the Transitional Administrator on 1 August and are now operational in all districts.

Finally, preparations for the establishment of the National Council, which will be the successor of the National Consultative Council, are well advanced. An open nomination process for the representatives of the districts and of civic organizations is underway. Representatives will be nominated from parties within the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) and from non-CNRT parties and the three main religions in East Timor. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General will be making the final selections. In the meantime, the National Consultative Council has continued to meet. It endorsed three regulations in August, including one prohibiting land transactions by Indonesian corporations and citizens who are not habitually resident in East Timor, pending the completion of negotiations with Indonesia on assets and claims.

Turning briefly to political activity over the last month, I would like to mention that the CNRT congress, which is evidently a very important event, began on 21 August and will conclude its deliberations today. The CNRT leadership, including its President, Xanana Gusmão, stood down at the opening of the congress, pending the decisions to be taken by the congress regarding the CNRT's future. We will revert to the Council with additional information once UNTAET has been able to assess the results of the congress, which as I said will complete its work today.

In conclusion, it can be said that UNTAET has continued over the past month to make steady progress in a number of areas. However, UNTAET has become seriously concerned – as I have tried to show in this briefing – with the security situation in East Timor and with the continuing plight of the refugees in the camps in West Timor. We would welcome the Council's

continued strong support as UNTAET continues its efforts to address and resolve these issues.

Finally, tomorrow will mark the first anniversary of the popular consultation in East Timor. A lot of positive developments have taken place since the frenzy of violence and destruction that visited East Timor following the announcement of the result of the popular consultation, on 4 September last year. The deployment of the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) and UNTAET, and the work done by UNTAET since its establishment last October, have made it possible for the East Timorese to look forward to a better future and to the realization of their aspirations to independence. UNTAET will continue, with the support of the Council, to work with the East Timorese to prepare them for that challenge.

The President: I thank Mr. Annabi for his statement on the situation in East Timor and on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

Before giving the floor to the first speaker inscribed on my list, let me welcome the Secretary-General to this meeting of the Council.

Mr. Minton (United States of America): I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his extremely useful comments, which as usual have brought the situation very much into focus. It is enormously encouraging information to receive about the efforts of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to develop the civic and economic institutions of East Timor. This is all very positive. At the same time, my delegation is disturbed by the information that he has provided on the rise in negative activities by the militias, and by the apparent continued tolerance and active encouragement of those activities by some elements in the Indonesian Armed Forces (TNI).

I therefore think that the work of the Council is pretty well defined. We have to encourage the positive efforts that UNTAET is making to develop the economy and the society in East Timor. We have to devote continued attention and exert ongoing pressure to see to it that the refugee situation is resolved and that the very damaging activities of the militias and of those that support them, come to an end.

This meeting is also timely because the anniversary of the popular consultation — when 80 per cent of the Timorese population expressed its choice for the future, a choice that was then recognized by President Wahid and the Government of Indonesia — is just one day away. The United States Department of State yesterday released a statement marking that anniversary and congratulating the people of East Timor for their long, difficult and courageous struggle for independence, which is now a year closer to realization. My delegation looks forward to conveying that message directly to Xanana Gusmão and José Ramos-Horta, who will both be in New York as special guests of the Secretary-General for the Millennium Summit.

The United States statement yesterday went on to note that, sadly, over 100,000 refugees remain in camps in West Timor. The security situation in those camps is still completely unacceptable to my Government. As we heard from Assistant Secretary-General Annabi in his briefing today, the situation cannot be tolerated and is not satisfactory. The Council has to make that clear in our proceedings today. The State Department spokesperson yesterday urged the Indonesian Government to restore security throughout West Timor and to develop a workable plan for the repatriation and resettlement of the refugees, as we have urged in this Council time and time again.

In the Council, we have deplored recurring militia activity along the border and in East Timor, and the resultant deaths of two United Nations peacekeepers. It is possible that the 30 August anniversary may tempt the militia and others to resort to even more violence. Today's meeting is useful in conveying that such violence cannot and will not be tolerated. The militias and those who support them must be stopped, disarmed and disbanded immediately.

The international community and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees must see concrete action by the Government of Indonesia to address the troubling security problems with the militias before UNHCR resumes its important functions in West Timor. And UNTAET must be allowed to carry out its important work in conjunction with the people of East Timor, who spoke so clearly just a year ago. We hope that our proceedings today — the briefing and the comments around this table will support those objectives.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President, for arranging this meeting. Thanks are due

also to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for a useful, timely and comprehensive briefing. It is also a real pleasure to see the Secretary-General here today.

I am pleased that we have this opportunity to commemorate the events of the last year in East Timor. Today we face a situation in which militia violence in East Timor is again rearing its ugly head, in which personnel of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) have been subject to fatal attack and in which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has been forced by intimidation to suspend its activities in the refugee camps of West Timor. So it is not inappropriate to remind ourselves now of why the Security Council and the United Nations are involved in East Timor: because a year ago tomorrow, over 90 per cent of the registered voters in the territory braved appalling violence and intimidation to have their say on how they wanted to be governed. A few days later, on 3 September, the Secretary-General announced to us that 78.5 per cent of those voters had chosen independence.

I speak from the heart when I say that all of us in the Council that evening were genuinely moved. The East Timorese people had demonstrated their faith in democracy and the rule of law with a massive show of courage and determination. We reacted by immediately issuing a presidential statement, which underlined the need for the result to be implemented in an atmosphere of peace and security, without further violence and intimidation.

Sadly, it was not to be. As is so often the case, the "spoilers", of whom Ambassador Brahimi has so eloquently spoken in his report on United Nations peace operations, sought to undermine the 5 May 1999 accords and the 30 August ballot through violence. To its credit, the Council acted swiftly and unanimously to authorize the dispatch of the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) to restore law and order. We should again thank the Australian Government for taking the lead so steadfastly in that operation, and at such an immense cost.

The Council needs to show the same level of commitment and determination today. As Assistant Secretary-General Annabi said, militias are again attempting to undermine the peaceful implementation of the ballot result by violence. The United Kingdom is deeply disturbed by the deteriorating security situation on both sides of the Timor border. Well-armed militias are involved, and their actions appear to be orchestrated towards some sinister goal. They are targeting UNTAET personnel. Two have died so far.

That is unacceptable; this situation cannot be allowed to continue. Special Representative Vieira de Mello has already responded, as Mr. Annabi said, by putting the downsizing of the military component of UNTAET on hold. But Indonesia must cooperate more closely with UNTAET to end the cross-border incursions from West Timor, to disarm and disband the militias and to prosecute militia members guilty of crimes.

We were also appalled by the attack on three UNHCR workers at the Naen refugee camp on 22 August. The Indonesian Government has expressed its willingness to take the situation in hand; but we regret that it has so far been unable to ensure security in the camps. Fine words are not enough; it is now time to turn them into deeds.

Against this background, we support the initial decision of UNHCR to suspend its work in the refugee camps until security is restored, hard though that decision was. It is good news that, as Mr. Annabi has told us today, UNHCR is now going back in. But it is imperative for the Indonesian Government to act quickly to bring the security situation in the camps under control. It should disarm those who are preventing UNHCR from carrying out its task and bring to justice those who commit assaults on United Nations personnel.

We are encouraged, on the more positive side of the coin, by the Indonesian Government's initiative to resettle East Timorese refugees who are still in West Timor, either in Indonesia or in East Timor itself. But we would welcome more information on the implementation of this plan. The first step must be to stabilize the security situation to enable the registration process to be carried out.

Another encouraging development has been the Indonesian Government's efforts to identify suspects involved in human rights abuses last year. We look forward to seeing those people brought to justice.

UNTAET has achieved a great deal over the last year. Assistant Secretary-General Annabi's briefing bears that out. He has asked for the Council's strong support, and I am sure that he will have it. But much

more remains to be done. We in the Council must remain vigilant. We must show our determination not to allow the excellent work of Sergio Vieira de Mello and UNTAET to be jeopardized by militia violence. The United Kingdom stands ready to bring forward formal Council action to this effect if it appears necessary. Like all members of the European Union, on whose behalf the representative of France will speak later in this debate, we are fully committed to helping the East Timorese people achieve the independence that they voted for so overwhelmingly. Like others around this table, we look forward to seeing East Timor emerge as the first new democracy of the twenty-first century.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): We thank you, Mr. President, for scheduling this open meeting on East Timor, and we thank you for the expression of condolences on the death of the Bangladesh soldier in East Timor, who lost his life in the cause of peace. Our thanks go also to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive briefing on the latest developments in East Timor.

Among the many daunting challenges faced by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), capacity-building in the field of human resource development stands out. We fully support the policy adopted by UNTAET of consultation with the relevant United Nations agencies and other development partners in determining the needs in this field. The draft strategy for human resource development and institution-building presented recently in a workshop appears to be the correct step-by-step approach.

We are very concerned at the recent encounters between the UNTAET peacekeeping force and the militia, which led to the loss of a number of peacekeepers' lives. As regrettable as that is, the broader implications, both for the scope of the United Nations mission and for the repatriation of refugees, is very disturbing.

The repatriation of refugees has almost ground to a halt. The situation in the refugee camps remains tense. The UNHCR personnel and other aid workers continue to be targeted by the militia. As we have done in the past, we strongly call for appropriate action to stop such militia activities.

We have noted the decision taken by the Indonesian authorities to close down refugee camps in West Timor in a matter of months. It is our view that this step should be taken if full coordination and consultation with UNTAET and UNHCR. That way, the solution would be sustainable and would contribute to the ultimate goal of repatriation of East Timorese refugees. We deem it indispensable that the registration process be completed by UNHCR before the closure of the camps. But for the interim, efforts must be made to ensure security of the refugees as well as of the international aid workers in West Timor.

We welcome the initiative taken by the Government of Indonesia in speeding up the repatriation process. We recognize that the success of this initiative will depend on the financial aspect as well as on creating conditions, both social and economic, on both sides of the border that are conducive to the process of repatriation and resettlement. It is encouraging to note that offers of assistance have started.

We were encouraged to hear at last month's briefing that FALINTIL members had received interim assistance from UNTAET while a definitive arrangement was under study by a group from King's College, London. We feel that the outcome of the study should be the subject of prior discussion between FALINTIL and UNTAET. We believe the security arrangements of the territory must be determined by informed decision of the East Timorese leadership. UNTAET would play a facilitating role in making the decision.

Tomorrow East Timor will celebrate the first anniversary of the landmark referendum in which its people decided in favour of independence. For some time now we have seen a momentum slowly built towards a process of transition towards independence. This is only as expected, and we fully support the preparatory steps being taken by UNTAET in this regard. On their part, the East Timorese leadership is also engaged.

Here, if I may digress from my text, I express our concern about the reported resignation of Mr. Xanana Gusmão. Then subsequently we learned that he has withdrawn his resignation. Maybe we can hear whether there is any confirmation of this news from Mr. Annabi.

In an ongoing first-ever multiparty congress the people of East Timor have entered into a discourse about the development of a constitution and the

divising of a national human rights action plan. We believe these Timorese inputs are the most crucial ones in the process of transition and should therefore emanate from an inclusive and broad-based participation of the people of East Timor.

Mr. Hamer (Netherlands): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence with us today, and Mr. Annabi for his very useful briefing.

The representative of France will make a statement on behalf of the European Union. Of course the Netherlands fully subscribes to that statement.

East Timor has come a long way since its popular consultation one year ago and the rampage of violence and senseless destruction that followed it. Like others before me, I would like to express our gratitude and admiration to Mr. Vieira de Mello and all the men and women in the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and, indeed, in the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) in an earlier phase. The vast majority of those dedicated people, both United Nations and East Timorese, remain anonymous, but the results of their work will remain for others to build on.

East Timor seems to be on the right track. However, a great deal of reconstruction and nation-building still remains to be done. The active involvement of the international community, including that of the Security Council, remains indispensable. In particular, we cannot put this great project in jeopardy by too-early a withdrawal of hands-on international involvement.

The challenge confronting East Timor is not only social, economic and institutional in nature. Unfortunately, as we learned today from Mr. Annabi's briefing, the military-security situation remains as precarious as ever, and it has indeed deteriorated. Well-trained and well-equipped militia members infiltrate from bases in West Timor, almost with impunity. On 3 August the Security Council called for a military assessment of the security situation and its implications for the military component of UNTAET. I would be grateful to Mr. Annabi for an indication of when the Secretariat intends to organize that briefing for the Council.

With regard to the refugee camps in West Timor, we too are deeply concerned by the attack on three workers from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Under such circumstances it is difficult for UNHCR to carry out its crucial tasks, including the vitally important one of registering the refugees. I would like to ask Mr. Annabi how the Secretariat interprets the statements by Indonesian Foreign Minister Shihab that the refugee camps in West Timor will soon be closed. How realistic are such statements, in light of the continued activities of the militias, who are both better equipped and better organized than before and whose actions go virtually unchecked?

Finally, the Netherlands expects Indonesia to fulfil fully its obligations in prosecuting those responsible for the violations of human rights committed in East Timor. Unfortunately, new legislation recently adopted by the Indonesian parliament raises some uncomfortable uncertainties in this regard. However, the fact that Prosecutor-General Marzuki Darusman has drawn up a list of 33 persons who will be indicted soon does give rise to some hope that Indonesia will start early legal proceeding in these cases.

Mr. Granovsky (Russian Federation) *(spoke in Russian)*: We too should like to express our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for having convened this meeting, and also to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his very comprehensive briefing.

The Russian Federation considers it deeply symbolic that our meeting today is taking place practically on the first anniversary of the popular consultation on the status of East Timor. Looking back over the events of this year, we cannot but recall the casualties and destruction which came in the wake of the proclamation of the results of the consultation, and the not-indifferent reactions on the part of the world community to events in East Timor. The United Nations and its Security Council have made a contribution on a par with their mission to ensure peace in this region. This policy should be continued.

Clearly the anniversary does not detract from our evaluating the priorities of today. As in any other sphere, positive achievements are interspersed with negative developments. Among the former, naturally, we must include the efforts aimed at national reconciliation and, for example, such a welcome development as the opening in Dili of the first employment centre.

Among the factors of concern, we find it necessary to recall the cessation, as of 22 August, of operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in West Timor, which Mr. Annabi told us about, in response to the beating of humanitarian staff at the hands of the so-called militias. We express our satisfaction at the intention to resume this activity. We consider that the problem of refugee camps located in the Indonesian part of the island should be resolved if possible in the shortest time. In this connection we are hopeful, in light of the new plans announced by the Indonesian authorities in this sphere. At any rate, we would like to underscore the need to ensure the security of United Nations and international staff.

In conclusion, we wish to express the hope that the second year of the transition to independence in East Timor will prove richer in good news.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish first to thank you, Mr. President, for arranging today's open meeting. The Chinese delegation also thanks the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Annabi, for his comprehensive briefing.

Tomorrow is an important day in the history of East Timor. One year ago tomorrow, a popular consultation took place in East Timor under United Nations auspices, which set East Timor on the road of nation-building. Over the past year, with the support of the international community, the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has made tangible progress in reviving the economy, rebuilding homes and other infrastructure, maintaining public order and security, formulating legislation, creating jobs and training local people. Moreover, it has set up a joint Cabinet with East Timorese members, which has enabled local people to have greater and expedited participation in the transition process. This meets with our satisfaction.

We appreciate and are grateful for the great quantity of work carried out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, and his staff. They have made all this progress in very difficult working conditions: an admirable achievement. It is our belief that the Security Council will continue to support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. De Mello.

The task of UNTAET in East Timor is to build a new country from scratch, which is an unprecedented challenge for the United Nations. I want to stress that in formulating relevant criteria and standards for the independence of East Timor, attention must always be paid to the need to respect the traditions and the culture of East Timor, and the will and the choices of the local people.

We are very concerned at the security situation in East Timor. The fact that a number of violent incidents have taken place in the border areas is particularly disquieting. We condemn the violent attacks on United Nations peacekeepers, and we hope that those acts of violence and those incidents will be thoroughly investigated. We expect the Indonesian Government to continue to cooperate with UNTAET and to take steps to guarantee safety and security in the East Timor border areas. We welcome the Indonesian Government's decision to close refugee camps in West Timor, which we hope will lead to a final solution of the problem of the refugees remaining in West Timor. An appropriate solution requires help from the international community and cooperation from the Indonesian Government. We believe that the Indonesian Government will honour its commitments and will continue its good cooperation with UNTAET.

Mr. Theron (Namibia): I wish to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Annabi, for his comprehensive briefing today on the situation in East Timor. Despite reports of steady progress in the work of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), that body is now faced with an increasingly difficult security situation.

When the people of East Timor celebrate the first anniversary of the popular consultation, tomorrow, they will no doubt do so with a mixture of joy and sadness: joy because at that time they were able to make a decision that would determine their own future, the results of which are well under way today, and sadness because of the violence and killings they had to endure before and after that vote. The East Timorese will, however, also realize that they are on a road of no return, with full independence to be attained next year.

If I can now turn to other issues, my delegation is satisfied with the current progress in the selection of representatives to the National Council. As we have stated before, that expanded body will better facilitate

consultations with the East Timorese. Similarly, other positive developments, such as the completion of the first diplomatic course and the work of the Civil Service Academy, are welcome.

The infiltration of armed militias from West Timor remains a concern for my delegation, and the recent killing or wounding of United Nations peacekeepers is deeply regretted. The response of UNTAET in suppressing this now well coordinated threat is welcome. We agree that the situation should be closely monitored. We also call on the responsible authorities in Indonesia to take effective measures to prevent further incursions.

We are similarly concerned about the plight of the refugees in camps in West Timor, which is a result of militia violence and intimidation. My delegation is particularly disturbed at the fact that militia activities have increased and that the militias are now operating openly. In this regard, we welcome the undertaking by the Government of Indonesia to address the situation in the camps in order to stop militia activities. This should, however, be done in strict coordination with UNTAET. The Indonesian Government should also take measures to assist with voluntary repatriation to East Timor and with resettling refugees who do not wish to return to East Timor, a ask in which the international community should assist Indonesia.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Mr. De Mello and his staff for a job well done. However, we also think it is appropriate to take a moment to pay tribute to their predecessors, namely Mr. Ian Martin and the staff of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), and the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET), for their courageous work last year during the difficult period before and after the popular consultation.

Miss Durrant (Jamaica): Let me thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this open meeting on East Timor. I wish also to express my delegation's appreciation to the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hédi Annabi, for his timely and useful briefing.

Last year's popular consultation on East Timor marked an important stage in the struggle of the people of East Timor for self-determination and independence. On this, the eve of the anniversary of the popular consultation, Jamaica salutes the indomitable spirit and courage of the people of East Timor, and continued solidarity and support.

We cannot but recall the tragic loss of destruction of property which occurred fo popular consultation. It is therefore hearteni year later, substantial gains have been democratic structures and institutions of firmly in place. The National Council ha play a crucial role in the political process, departments of government responsible for policies. An environment has been creat growth of multi-party democracy in prep democratic elections. Progress has also towards the establishment of a credible justice, with the recent opening of anot court, outside Dili in Baucau, and with th development of a national action plan on hu Important to this process must be continue bring to justice those responsible for crimes following last year's referendum.

Other positive developments improvements in public health ser revitalization of the education system a resource capacity-building, including the civil servants and police.

All of this could not have been possi the direct involvement of the international first through the International Force in (INTERFET) and then by the Unite Transitional Administration in East Timor This involvement must continue.

We recognize the enormous contributi the dedicated men and women, some of given their lives in the cause of peace, and the expression of condolences to the Gover people of Bangladesh and Nepal for the casualties.

As Mr. Annabi indicated, UNTAET ha its important work in governance, in provid and in rebuilding the economy. We are plea of the improvements in the employment si view these developments as significant building.

It is against this background that my d deeply concerned that the deterioratin situation in East Timor and the events taki

West Timor threaten to disrupt the progress already achieved.

We condemn the assault by militias on the staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Timor and deeply regret that the UNHCR has had to suspend its work in West Timor due to the harm inflicted by the militias. We deplore any act that seeks to disrupt the important work of relief agencies and that negatively impacts on the safety and well-being of aid workers as well as on refugees.

We look forward to receiving the results of the investigations being conducted in conjunction with the Indonesian authorities.

My delegation hopes that the repatriation of the more than 100,000 refugees remaining in West Timor can be completed in a timely and safe manner with the combined efforts of UNTAET, UNHCR and the Indonesian authorities, especially in light of the imminent closure of the refugee camps.

Reports also indicate that confrontations near the border with West Timor continue and we urge the Indonesian Government to do its utmost to end the cross-border incursions from West Timor, as well as to provide guarantees for the security of aid workers and refugees.

We are aware that the Indonesian Government has sent a brigade of troops to provide protection to aid workers and refugees but it is clear that the militias continue to act with impunity. This cannot be allowed to continue. We therefore reiterate our appeal for the disbandment and disarming of the militias and for the bringing to justice those persons responsible for the crimes committed.

In conclusion, we would wish to reiterate our support for the work of UNTAET and for the people of East Timor on their journey towards independence. We look forward to welcoming East Timor into the family of nations.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) *(spoke in Spanish)*: Thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this open briefing on East Timor. I should also like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Hedi Annabi, for the comprehensive information he has provided us.

Precisely a year ago the people of East Timor prepared to take a crucial decision about its future, choosing between full autonomy within Indonesia and independence. On 30 August 1999, the inhabitants of the territory decided by an overwhelming majority to initiate the process of transition to independence under United Nations tutelage.

The road of transition was not free of difficulties or risks. Evidence of this were the acts of violence and destruction which were unleashed subsequent to the popular consultation. The scope of the humanitarian disaster that ensued has given rise to serious concern by the international community and has led to concerted United Nations system-wide action.

A year later, after all these serious incidents, it is gratifying to see that the humanitarian emergency has been put behind us. It is also worth noting the progress made in creating the institutions that will serve as the basis for the territory's independence. Against this backdrop it should be underscored that the main decisions were taken after the holding of consultations with the representative of the people of East Timor and that the Timorese themselves are, in an increasing fashion, shouldering major responsibility for managing their own interests.

I should like to reiterate Argentina's appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, and to all the UNTAET staff for the outstanding job they have done. They carried out their task under extremely trying circumstances – at times, indeed, when the safety and security of United Nations staff were seriously endangered. A number of UNTAET personnel lost their lives in the line of duty in recent weeks. I should like to convey to the Governments of Bangladesh and Nepal and to the family members of the victims the sincere condolences of the Argentine Government and people.

Notwithstanding the overall improvement in the situation in East Timor, we must once again voice our concern at the lack of resolution of two serious problems: incursions by the militias along the land borders and the situation of the refugees in the West Timor refugee camps. In both instances, we find that, notwithstanding the time that has passed and the requests made by the international community, the situation has not improved - rather it has grown worse in the last month. Thus, we reaffirm again our appeal

that militia elements still operating in East Timor be disbanded and separated from refugees and that their activities be monitored.

We trust that the Indonesian authorities will live up to all the commitments they have made and will make the decisions necessary as quickly as possible to put an end once and for all, to these serious problems.

Mr. Duval (Canada) *(spoke in French)*: Mr. President, I, too, would like first of all to thank you for having organized this open meeting on the question of East Timor which takes place more than on an anniversary but actually at a very critical time for the development of the security climate in that area. I should also like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Annabi, for his detailed briefing on the situation in East Timor.

Canada, like all those who have spoken, is very alarmed over the wave of violent incidents and the general deterioration of security in East Timor. The acts of violence perpetrated recently against the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the humanitarian personnel by the militia favouring integration are disturbing and unacceptable. Canada is particularly concerned and saddened by the deaths of two peacekeepers in two separate incidents that occurred last month as well as by the aggression continuously perpetrated against personnel of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Our condolences go out to the families of the bereaved in New Zealand and Nepal and Bangladesh, to which you referred at the beginning of the meeting.

We have taken note of the decision of Indonesia and UNTAET jointly to investigate the deaths of these two blue helmets in order to prosecute those responsible for the crimes. Perhaps, at the end of the meeting, Mr. Annabi could tell us if any progress has been achieved in that area.

The heads of the militias must respect their commitment not to hamper the safe return of refugees. We expect the Indonesian Government to play a constructive role in that respect, notably by ensuring that local and international humanitarian personnel facilitating these returns does not live in constant fear and that no harm will come to them. Mr. Annabi referred to the efforts of the Indonesian Government to restore order and security in these camps. Those measures are essential. They must be continued vigorously in close cooperation with UNCTAET, as has been underscored by a number of previous speakers, and my delegation would like the Council to be informed regularly on progress achieved and difficulties encountered.

Could Mr. Annabi perhaps confirm for us whether the Indonesian Government has already done what ever is necessary to begin separating the members of the militias from the people in the camps?

We have taken note of the Indonesian Government's plan to dismantle the refugee camps in West Timor. We think that all returns must be voluntary and that the question of responsibility for the security of refugees will have to be resolved in advance. It would be interesting to see if and how UNTAET will deal with this matter.

We are also extremely alarmed over the other problems that deter the refugees from returning home, aside from the problems of militias and violence. It is probable that few refugees will return home as long as the problems related to possible options for their resettlement, the lack of infrastructure in East Timor and the withdrawal of officials have not been resolved. We would like to know if UNTAET has taken measures in that regard.

We would like to pay tribute to UNTAET for its efforts to work closely with the Timorese in the administration of their territory and for having tried, through the National Council, to strengthen local capacity in terms of security and government. The Timorese must be included in the United Nations administration, particularly as regards the security needs the territory will face in order to properly prepare for the withdrawal of the Mission.

The creative work undertaken by UNTAET in the sphere of administration of justice has laid a solid foundation in that country, and we hope that this work will lead to closer cooperation between UNTAET and the Indonesian authorities, with a view to prosecuting those who are guilty of human rights violations. While the Indonesian Justice Ministry continues its investigation, we would encourage it to continue its cooperation with UNTAET so as to ensure better access to evidence and witnesses. In that respect, Indonesia is an essential partner of the Council.

In conclusion, we think that it would be useful, as the representative of the Netherlands has mentioned,

that the Council be informed opportunely of the security situation from the military point of view.

Mr. Maiga (Mali) (*spoke in French*): May I, in turn, now thank Mr. Annabi for the very comprehensive information he has given us and thank you, Mr. President, at the same time for having held this open briefing on East Timor, which comes on the eve of the first anniversary of the popular consultation organized in that country.

When we considered this issue last month, we took note of strides made by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) — remarkable strides at all levels indeed — in devising consultative machinery with the East Timorese, establishing the structures for a future independent State, providing safety and security for most people and, finally, rebuilding the country. My delegation is following the evolution of the situation in East Timorese with keen attention and would like, in this connection, to make the following observations.

In submitting the Secretary-General's second quarterly report on UNTAET's work, and in consideration of this issue last month, the Secretariat pointed out that the major challenge facing the East Timorese was to rebuild the political system, ensuring the broadest possible participation in the process. We do not need to stress the fact that the interim administration is effectively doing its job by setting up a local democratic structure. More than ever, UNTAET must strive to develop a civil society and rules leading to the rule of law. Political pluralism and the involvement of all East Timorese in the context of transparency and on an equal footing as democracy is set up will create the feeling of belonging to a community based on law and obligations. The latest measures taken by the United Nations Transitional Administrator in East Timor has deepened discussion as to the political transition. It brings us ever closer to independence for the country.

Secondly, notwithstanding repeated appeals addressed to them, extremist and militia elements continue to sabotage the peace process set in motion by the international community. It is unacceptable that these achievements during the transition process be threatened by a minority. We must exhort Indonesia to become more closely involved in seeking an end to trans-border violence and make sure that all steps be taken to help UNTAET neutralize this threat. We hail the measures taken by UNTAET itself to re-deploy its units in sensitive areas and urge it to become more fully involved in stemming acts of violence perpetrated against United Nations staff.

Thirdly, the UNHCR's decision to withdraw from the refugee camps shows the gravity of the situation. We stress the urgent need to provide adequate safety and security for the people concerned. The Indonesian authorities' steps in this connection assume the utmost importance; not just to the camps themselves but to the question of refugee repatriation.

Further consolidation of the democratic process in East Timor will depend on economic success. The increase in the number of Timorese enterprises is a positive step along these lines. The international community must continue to support efforts made to ensure economic long-term recovery.

The process set in motion in East Timor is certainly an example of a success story for our Organization. Nevertheless, it remains necessary to be vigilant and strongly support it throughout the international community to ensure that the wishes and sacrifices made by the East Timorese soon will be compensated.

Mr. Chaouachi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like, first and foremost, to thank Mr. Annabi for his exhaustive and useful briefing.

It is almost a year since the population of East Timorese expressed its will to begin a transition process towards independence under the authority of the United Nations. Today we would like to express our satisfaction for the work done by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), and particularly by Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello and his team, who deserve a tribute. Of course, UNTAET does have a great deal of merit in progress achieved this far and in the tangible results that have been reached. However, we should underscore the important role that humanitarian organizations continue to play in East Timor and in West Timor, as well as the Indonesian Government's determination to cooperate with UNTAET, with a view to resolving all the pending problems in order to have a successful transition towards the independence of East Timor.

The situation remains to be a source of major concern despite all the efforts that have been made. This in no way detracts from the importance of the

progress that has been achieved by Mr. Vieira de Mello and his team in the context of laying the foundations for the new architecture of East Timor.

The question of refugees, as well as the security issue, are among those which may have an adverse consequence on the situation if remedies are not brought to bear upon the situation with the necessary swiftness. In fact, the difficult plight of refugees which, according to the latest report of the Secretary-General, number between 85,000 and 120,000, is worrying and could be exacerbated, and it could especially have an impact upon the decision of certain humanitarian organizations to suspend their activities because of the dangerous conditions under which they are carrying out their work.

UNTAET, East Timorese officials and the Indonesian authorities should take appropriate measures to put a radical end to the destabilizing activities led by the militias still present in the refugee camps in West Timor and along the border. This situation could easily discourage the promotion of economic activities in this region and have an adverse impact on public law and order, which is very sensitive.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): Like previous speakers, I also would like to thank Mr. Annabi for his informative briefing on the latest developments in East Timor. The briefing indicates that the security situation gives rise to deep concern. We have also heard today about the continued dangerous militia activities in a number of districts in East Timor.

It was with deep regret that we learned about the deaths of two peacekeepers in East Timor. We convey our condolences to their families and to the Governments of Bangladesh and Nepal.

We are dismayed at the recent attacks on the personnel of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Timor. My delegation condemns violent attacks against United Nations peacekeepers and international relief workers and believes that ensuring their safety and security should be among the priority tasks of the Council. It is now of critical importance to stop the cross-border incidents along the border with West Timor.

We also note with regret that the situation in the camps of West Timor also continues to be a matter of serious concern, particularly in terms of the safety and living conditions of the refugees.

As we heard from Mr. Annabi, the repatriation of refugees to East Timor remains insignificant. We deplore the ongoing acts of intimidation and violence by militias against refugees, and we call upon the Indonesian Government to make further efforts to collaborate with UNHCR. The safe return of refugees from West Timor to East Timor should be ensured. That is one of the major tasks faced by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET).

Tomorrow, the people of East Timor will celebrate the first anniversary of the popular consultation that took place in East Timor under United Nations supervision. We congratulate the people of East Timor on this occasion. We also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the efforts of UNTAET under the leadership of Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, which has taken up a major challenge in undertaking the administration of East Timor and preparing it for independence.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Malaysia.

I wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for updating the Council on the situation in East Timor.

Since many issues related to the transitional process in East Timor and the United Nations mission there have already been touched upon in past discussions, as well as by earlier speakers, I shall confine my intervention to only three aspects, namely, the security situation, the question of an East Timorese defence force and the refugee situation.

Of course, like others, we note that tomorrow is the first anniversary of the United Nations-sponsored consultation process in East Timor.

We continue to be deeply concerned about the refugee situation, in respect of the security conditions both in the camps hosting East Timorese refugees and along the repatriation route between East Timor and Indonesia. The United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) is struggling to cope with militia incursions that have left local people afraid and vulnerable. While UNTAET can contain militia activity inside East Timor, it cannot be expected to totally secure the border. Militias that have

infiltrated the border might well be biding their time before hitting pre-designated targets.

We note that the fatal clashes of 10 August between Nepalese United Nations soldiers and the militia near the town of Suai followed a spate of militia incursions along the West Timor border over the last two months. The increasing number of incidents between the militia and United Nations patrols is also further delaying the return of East Timorese refugees and fuelling fears that security in the border region will continue to deteriorate. UNTAET will therefore have to remain vigilant. We hope this problem will not significantly affect East Timor's security. In that regard, we trust that more strenuous efforts will be made to rein in the militias and to expedite the return of East Timorese from the refugee camps in West Timor.

We note that in their first move out of forced cantonment since United Nations deployment in East Timor, the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor (FALINTIL) will join UNTAET in security operations along the border. FALINTIL's plan to join in the territory's defence came as the United Nations mission in East Timor signalled that FALINTIL would be recognized as the core of the territory's new defence force.

We recognize that while the forging of regional relationships contributes to the security of East Timor, it must also be prepared to defend itself. Top officials from UNTAET have already met with East Timorese army commanders to discuss proposals for a security system for an independent East Timor. The options would involve either the creation of a defence force through conscription or the maintenance of a volunteer reserve force of a varied number of troops. We recognise the important contribution of King's College of London through its independent study on this aspect of East Timor's future needs.

In another sign of the emerging political face of the new East Timor, Mr. Xanana Gusmão turned over his post as Commander-in-Chief of FALINTIL to his deputy at a ceremony marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the guerrilla army on 20 August. We welcome this move, which will further strengthen the credentials of Mr. Gusmão as a leader and a statesman in the post-independence period. We believe this hand-over of military command to be a symbolic but important act, as it affirms the democratic principle of the separation of the military from politics and paves the way for a democratic, independent East Timor.

We cannot fail to draw attention to the fact that, in contrast to the progress achieved in several areas, the suffering of the thousands of refugees who remain in camps has not been resolved satisfactorily. We would like to express the concern of my delegation about the seriousness of the current situation, particularly in certain areas where the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have had to suspend important activities because of intimidation by militias of the workers of those agencies. We condemn last week's attack by suspected militias on three UNHCR workers at a refugee camp in West Timor. We maintain that the key to any solution of the East Timor refugee problem in West Timor is the separation of former militias and soldiers from genuine refugees, the maintenance of law and order in the camps, and the clarification of the status of East Timorese employed by the Indonesian Government.

Malaysia remains firmly committed to peace and stability in East Timor. The Foreign Minister of Malaysia used the opportunity of his recent visit to East Timor to emphasize Malaysia's continuing support for East Timor's long-term reconstruction and development. He took along with him a group of important Malaysian entrepreneurs and also used the visit to underline Malaysia's concerns about militia activity in East Timor and in the border region and about the need for an early resolution to the refugee problem in West Timor.

Finally, Malaysia would like to pay tribute to UNTAET, for their continued commitment and high professionalism, and to the people of East Timor, who have shown remarkable patience and fortitude in facing their continuing hardships. Malaysia would also like to express its profound condolences to New Zealand, Bangladesh and Nepal for the loss of their soldiers in the service of the United Nations in East Timor.

I now resume my functions as the President of the Council.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate. We would also like to thank Mr. Annabi for

having presented us, as always, a fully detailed and exact description of the situation in East Timor.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — as well as Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, which are also associated with the European Union, endorse this statement.

The European Union wishes today to reaffirm its support for what the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) has done to lead East Timor to independence. A year ago, almost to the day, the East Timorese people chose independence. UNTAET, decisively spurred forward by the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Vieira de Mello, has already done considerable work, and that work must be pursued in full cooperation with the East Timorese themselves. It is essential that all strata of the Timorese population be able to take an effective part in building the future independent State. The establishment last month of a joint Government, bringing together representatives of UNTAET and of the Timorese on an equal footing, seems to us to be quite positive in this regard.

Nonetheless, the European Union remains extremely concerned over the situation of tens of thousands of East Timorese refugees in West Timor. The European Union urges Indonesia to fulfil totally and unconditionally its commitment to help those who wish to be repatriated and to put an end to the unacceptable campaigns of disinformation and intimidation waged by the militias in the refugee camps. The European Union condemns in the strongest terms the assault on 22 August against a team from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and deplores the fact that that attack, far from being an isolated act, was part of an almost continuous series of acts of harassment and violence against humanitarian personnel and refugees since the end of spring. The European Union notes with particular concern that these conditions compelled UNHCR to suspend its cooperation for a number of days.

The European Union takes note of the new commitments made by the Indonesian Government to settle the refugee question. It calls upon the Indonesian Government to take effective measures to restore law and order, to create conditions of safety and security for the refugees and the international humanitarian personnel, to make it possible for that personnel to have access to the camps in full freedom and security and to immediately arrest and bring to justice the extremist militia members who are trying to sabotage the reconciliation process. All these measures are indispensable in order to complete the registration of refugees, which will give them real freedom of choice between returning to East Timor as soon as possible or being settled in Indonesia.

The European Union is deeply concerned at the destabilizing impact of the incursion of well-trained and well-equipped militias into East Timor from West Timor. The militias' activities could make the process of transition to independence more fragile. In this context, the European Union especially condemns the killing of two UNTAET Blue Helmets, in late July and early August. It also deplores the recent death of a Bangladesh soldier.

The European Union believes that the conditions are in place in East Timor today to enable the Timorese to pursue a real and sturdy process of national reconciliation. In this context, it is vital that the international community continue to demonstrate its commitment to supporting the recovery and development of East Timor.

Timor has been the subject of an unprecedented United Nations operation. UNTAET has enjoyed considerable backing from the international community and the largest budget of all current peacekeeping operations. As has been the case for other peacekeeping operations, the costs and means of this operation need to be evaluated on an ongoing basis to ensure the best possible allocation of resources. In this context, the European Union recalls the request made by the Security Council last 3 August to have a military assessment of security conditions and of their implications for the structure of UNTAET's military component. The European Union would especially like to have up-to-date information on UNTAET's military needs, the effective distribution of capabilities in the territory in relation to local security constraints, the tasks actually assigned to UNTAET's military component and the prospects for how it will continue to evolve.

As we stressed last June in the Security Council, the European Union considers that the transition period in East Timor is entering a crucial phase. The United Nations mission, together with the East Timorese, must facilitate the emergence of a new, democratic State, one built upon the essential foundation of the primacy of law, an independent State that is fully integrated into its region and at peace with all its neighbours.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Australia. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for arranging this open meeting of the Council. Non-members of the Council are always appreciative of such opportunities, but particularly when they enable countries with direct interests in and close knowledge of a particular issue or situation to participate in a purposeful way — not just to have their say or to put something on record, but actually to help shape Council decisions and actions.

For my own Government, East Timor's transition to independence, the ongoing challenges faced by the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and East Timor's future prospects as an independent nation remain very high priorities. Australia wishes to see the emergence of a future independent East Timor that is stable, democratic, secure and has good relations with Indonesia and with its neighbouring region. All of these outcomes can be achieved only with the continuing active support of the international community for the transition process.

It is also particularly appropriate that this meeting, on the eve of the anniversary of the population consultation, should be open to all Members.

One year ago the international community watched as the people of East Timor prepared to express their will on the future of their territory, ignoring the threats and the intimidation which they had faced in the months leading up to the ballot. A matter of days later, representatives of many, many United Nations Member States gathered in this Chamber to voice their concern at the awful turn of events in East Timor and to urge — and indeed, to bring about — a rapid and effective international response to those events.

After an extraordinary year the people of East Timor can, we believe, mark the anniversary of that ballot, confident that their democratically expressed wish for independence is well on the way to being realized. The efforts of UNTAET and the East Timorese to prepare for independence have certainly been considerable and have been carried out in the face of substantial challenges and obstacles.

The anniversary of the ballot is in many respects an occasion for satisfaction, one in which all United Nations Members should rightly have the opportunity to share. It is also a timely opportunity to review the progress achieved and to appreciate what remains to be done. In that context, certainly my Government welcomed the Secretary-General's latest report on developments in the transition to independence, as well as the update that we were given today by Assistant Secretary-General Annabi. Under the able leadership of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, UNTAET has continued to carry out its mandate in a thoroughly professional and committed manner and to tackle the many challenges it has confronted with commendable decisiveness.

We would also like to pay tribute not just to the people on the ground in East Timor, in UNTAET, but to the people here at United Nations Headquarters, the Secretariat, who have an enormous workload but who have continued to anchor UNTAET operations at this end in an extremely effective way.

Despite some of the positive things we heard this morning, it is also clear that very serious problems remain. Australia is deeply concerned by, and condemns, the attacks on United Nations peacekeepers on the Indonesia-East Timor border, which have risen in number and in frequency in recent weeks. The tragic deaths of peacekeepers from Bangladesh, Nepal, New Zealand and my own country in recent weeks, and the attacks on humanitarian personnel, all point to continuing dangers. My Government has conveyed its sincere condolences to the Governments and families so sadly affected.

We are particularly concerned by continuing militia intimidation, especially militia harassment and threats in West Timor refugee camps, which forced UNHCR temporarily to suspend its operations in West Timor. Also we are concerned by the very disturbing suggestions we heard this morning of a change in the

pattern of activity by the militia, of increased sophistication and a sense of greater organization.

Ultimately, it is the Government of Indonesia which is responsible for ending militia incursions into East Timor and for providing effective security to ensure that there is no militia intimidation, that there is unimpeded access to the camps for UNHCR, and that there is a credible registration process for refugees in West Timor.

It was for this reason that my Government welcomed the Indonesian Government's recognition that dealing effectively with the West Timor refugee camps is fundamental to solving the problem of militia activity. We consider that the Indonesian Government's proposal to close the camps is a step in the right direction, and we very much welcome Indonesian discussions with UNTAET on taking this forward. My Government, along with a number of other members of the international community and the United Nations, is working closely with the Indonesian Government to explore the practical steps that are needed to implement Indonesia's proposal.

Over the last 12 months Australia has provided assistance of over 7 million Australian dollars to the refugees in these camps. We are prepared to offer further constructive, practical assistance to help people in the camps and to facilitate the repatriation of those wishing to return to East Timor. I want to emphasize that it is of fundamental importance that repatriation and resettlement of the remaining refugees be based on free choice.

Australia urges the Indonesian Government and TNI to redouble their efforts and to take all necessary steps to end militia activity in West Timor by disarming and disbanding the militia once and for all, by removing them from the refugee camps and by helping to bring to justice those who have committed crimes.

It is our earnest hope that this first anniversary of the popular consultation, this timely open Council meeting, and the concerns that we have listened to this morning as expressed by Council members and those that we will be hearing from other Member States today about ongoing problems will all help to bring the situation in East Timor into sharper focus for all Member States.

In particular, international attention and effort need to be engaged, directly and urgently, in the worrying security situation and in the serious problems in the refugee camps. We cannot allow — especially at this time and on the eve of the Millennium Summit, when the report on United Nations peace operations has just been released — the success of so many aspects of the effort by the United Nations and UNTAET in East Timor to be jeopardized by these problems. Nor, I would suggest, can we allow the profound promise sanctioned by this Council of a smooth transition to independence for East Timor and for the East Timorese people to be broken.

The President: I thank the representative of Australia for her kind words directed at my delegation and at other members of the Council. As always, the Council is pleased to hear the views of the larger membership of the Organization in important issues before it.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Brattskar (Norway): The Government of Norway is pleased to note the continued progress in East Timor over recent months, especially in the areas of physical reconstruction and the development of government structures. Both the speed and scope of projects implemented are steadily growing.

Norway has taken due note of the recent review of the humanitarian programme in East and West Timor. We appreciate the critical remarks made, and at the same time we recognize the enormous tasks that have been undertaken so far. Norway will support the revised UN consolidated inter-agency appeals for West and East Timor with approximately $600,000.

The critical humanitarian crisis in East Timor is now mostly behind us, but the challenges ahead are enormous. The primary goal for the international community — as we stated in this forum two months ago — must now be to further assist the East Timorese in their nation-building efforts, to create an independent, democratic and prosperous State.

Norway has provided strong support for East Timor since long before the crisis of last year, and we will continue to do so in the future. In 1999 we disbursed approximately 6 million dollars, primarily in humanitarian assistance. Our support will remain at

this level but will now be directed more towards longer-term needs for sustainable development and good governance.

We fully support the work of UNTAET and its partners in these formidable tasks. One of the most important challenges at this stage is to ensure greater participation in the building of the future State. In that context, we especially welcome the initiative to transform the National Consultative Council into a National Council, which is a broader and more representative body.

Norway attaches great importance to international crisis management and peacekeeping. This has been reflected in our engagement in East Timor in the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) and the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), and in our support for UNTAET, as well as in our contributions to the establishment of the police academy and the secondment of members of the investigation unit on human rights abuses.

Norway continues to be seriously concerned about the security situation on the border with Indonesia and in the refugee camps in West Timor. That situation led to the suspension of activities by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in West Timor. We call on the Indonesian authorities to prevent militia activities in and around the refugee camps and on the border. The Government of Norway fully supports the process of investigating last year's human rights violations and breaches of humanitarian law in East Timor. We urge the Indonesian Government to continue its efforts to address these issues in accordance with its responsibilities, and in cooperation with the United Nations and with the international community.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Brazil. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fonseca (Brazil): Allow me, Mr. President, to join previous speakers in thanking you for having organized this open meeting on East Timor. Your diplomatic skills have been an important asset in conducting the business of the Security Council during this month, and we are also grateful to you for that. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Annabi, for the briefing the Council heard today on the latest developments in East Timor.

East Timor has to complete several transitions: a transition from oppression to self-determination and independence; from economic backwardness to sustainable development; from fear and terror to stability and tranquillity. There are no easy solutions, and those transitions require patience, to be sure, but also resolve and determination. They also require close cooperation between the East Timorese people and the international community.

Tomorrow, 30 August, the East Timorese will be celebrating the first anniversary of the popular consultation organized by the United Nations. The massive participation of the East Timorese under very difficult circumstances reaffirmed to the international community their commitment to independence and to democracy. Although the violence that followed the announcement of the results of the popular consultation claimed lives and left its marks in the territory, and although some of its gruesome effects still linger, the popular consultation was a milestone in East Timor's long quest for independence. The Brazilian people wish to pay tribute to the East Timorese on this important occasion.

Given the devastation of the territory following last year's popular consultation, the progress achieved under the wise leadership of the Transitional Administrator and Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, is really remarkable.

It is true that the security environment has improved sharply since the deployment of the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) and its transition to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), but much remains to be done. The tragedies involving the death of peacekeepers are examples of the destabilizing potential of the incursions made by militias and armed extremists into East Timor's territory. I would like to express our deepest sympathy to the families of those killed in the line of duty, and to the Governments of Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal and New Zealand.

There have been reliable reports of an increasing number of militiamen infiltrating East Timor from West Timor, spreading fear among villagers. Those who are committed to violence as a political means should not be allowed to succeed in putting at risk the progress so painfully achieved. There must be zero tolerance towards those who want to bring back the

dark old days and to engulf East Timor in a new spree of violence. There is no alternative to the democratic process. That is the message that the international community should convey, loud and clear, to the extremist groups.

The cooperation of Indonesia is also crucial to putting an end to the activities of the militia. We expect the Government of Indonesia to expedite the implementation of the important agreements it has signed with UNTAET in the areas of security and border control. It is fundamentally important that further efforts be undertaken to disarm, disband and arrest the extremists who use West Timor as their base for attacks perpetrated in East Timor.

Brazil strongly condemns the attacks that took place on 23 August on staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at the Naen camp. The authorities in charge of security in the region must bring to a halt such cases of intimidation and harassment against relief workers and refugees alike. We thus favour a thorough investigation into this chain of events, and we hope that work of the UNHCR in the camps will resume very soon so as to make it possible to proceed smoothly with the repatriation activities. The comprehensive action plan to close down the refugee camps near the border within six months may improve security, but it should be implemented while taking into account the right of refugees to a sustainable livelihood.

At the same time, the military component of UNTAET must be given the means to counter the threat represented by highly armed militia members who are eager to attack and ambush peacekeepers. As Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello recently declared, "We are not going to allow our soldiers to become sitting ducks for these guys to aim at". Brazil is taking part actively in UNTAET, and intends to continue to contribute to diminishing tensions and circumscribing their effects.

The construction of a solid democracy depends not only on the legal framework to be adopted but also, first and foremost, on a sense of belonging to a community of rights and obligations. For democracy to take root, the people must feel that it is at the helm of the process. We are confident that the first congress of the National Council of East Timorese Resistance (CNRT) will prove to be an important step forward in that regard. The international community should welcome the proposals put forward last week by Mr. Vieira de Mello in his speech during the CNRT congress. He outlined the possible next steps, from the setting up of the National Council to the appointment of a constitutional commission to prepare a first draft of a constitution, the establishment of a legal framework for political and electoral processes, and the election of a constituent assembly.

All these steps are going to be discussed in depth with the East Timorese people, and various options are available and remain open. It is essential, though, to start discussing these issues as a matter of priority with the active participation of civil society. The urgency has to do with the need to create, from the beginning, the sense of belonging that I mentioned. Such a sense is easier to get when there is a clear horizon ahead, with independence as a watershed for the consolidation of democratic institutions.

Much has already been said about the complexity of the task of building a country almost from scratch after a wave of violence that wreaked havoc throughout the territory. It is essential, however, to stress again and again that a future independent East Timor will need the continued cooperation of the international community. Independence will have to be shored up by the international community, in particular by donor countries, in order to lead to the consolidation of democratic institutions and the improvement of the well-being of all the Timorese people.

There can be no solid democracy amidst destitution and despair, and no development can be real without respect for human rights. Despite budgetary constraints, Brazil is ready to start cooperation projects in East Timor. Our office in Dili has been instrumental in this regard. The Brazilian Agency for Cooperation undertook a mission to East Timor in late July and has set the parameters for cooperation in education, capacity-building and public health.

East Timor as we know it exists today only because the international community decided to display its solidarity in a timely manner. We cannot let that solidarity fade away when it is needed most. Let us keep alight the flame of hope that has guided the extraordinary people of East Timor through its ordeal. Let us keep alive the spirit of human solidarity that is the guarantee of better, brighter and happier days for East Timor.

The President: I thank the representative of Brazil for the kind words he addressed to me.

Before calling on the next speaker, I wish on behalf of the Security Council to convey profound condolences to Australia on the death of one of its soldiers on 9 August, to which the representative of Australia alluded earlier.

The next speaker is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): I appreciate this opportunity to speak to the Council again on the subject of East Timor, and I thank you for it, Mr. President. In June of this year my delegation expressed to this Council its concern following the militia incursions and attacks on United Nations peacekeepers, including the wounding of an Australian peacekeeper. Then in July a New Zealand peacekeeper was killed by the militia, and we took the opportunity to address the Council again, making the same point. On both occasions, we called for renewed efforts by the Indonesian Government to rein in the militia in West Timor.

But since then, a Nepalese peacekeeper serving with the New-Zealand-led battalion group has been killed in combat. I take this opportunity to repeat my Government's condolences in respect of his death and also in respect of the recent Australian and Bangladeshi casualties. In addition, there have been brutal attacks on staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). As the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Annabi, reported this morning, the situation appears to be getting worse, not better, with militias operating into the territory of East Timor, as well as along the border with West Timor.

That is intolerable, and my delegation would like to take this opportunity to repeat New Zealand's expectation that the Indonesian Government will take effective action against those in West Timor and elsewhere in Indonesia who seek to undermine East Timor's political and territorial integrity and who are responsible for intimidation and violence against United Nations personnel and East Timorese civilians. A year after the historic ballot in East Timor, it is high time that the territory's political and territorial integrity was respected.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): As this is the first time that my delegation has addressed the Security Council this month, let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of August. Allow me also to extend congratulations to your predecessor, Ambassador Mignonette Patricia Durrant, Permanent Representative of Jamaica, on her stewardship of the Council's activities last month.

We have listened attentively to the previous speakers. Many have referred to recent acts of violence, including the incidents that caused the death of United Nations peacekeepers from Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal and New Zealand. Let me take this opportunity to join those who have spoken before me and extend the Indonesian delegation's heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families in this hour of sorrow, and our deepest sympathy to the Governments and the peoples of Australia, Bangladesh, Nepal and New Zealand. Consistent with my Government's policy, we reiterate our strong condemnation of all acts of violence, including the most recent, where three United Nations staff members involved in humanitarian work were injured, which led to the suspension of the repatriation efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). We look forward to the results of the joint investigations that are currently under way.

Time and again, irresponsible quarters have described these acts of violence as being sanctioned by Indonesia. One has claimed, for example, that

> "clashes between the pro-Jakarta groups and peacekeepers have become more frequent recently, and there is growing speculation that sections of the Indonesian armed forces have been arming and training the gangs".

It has also been suggested that "attacks by pro-Indonesia militias operate with impunity". While no one is denying that certain incidents have indeed occurred, we must nevertheless keep in perspective all the rumours that abound. Allegations have been made that the militias are now better equipped and better armed, and that they are wearing camouflage uniforms. But this does not mean that they are supported by the Indonesian armed forces, as such material can be easily acquired on the black market. Let me recall the reports that armed groups were active in central and western

East Timor and that militias were burning houses, reports which later proved to be groundless.

Indonesia fully shares the concerns expressed in this Chamber; as on previous occasions, we would like to reiterate that we are determined to take the necessary steps to ensure security and to prevent such incidents from recurring. Indeed, one such step was taken on 12 November 1999, when the so-called militia groups were formally disbanded. But we must not forget that the refugee problem is a complex, complicated and a multi-dimensional one.

Under the agreed Memorandum of Understanding between Indonesia and the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), each side is responsible for providing security on its respective side of the border. In order to avoid the occurrence of incidents in border areas, Indonesia proposed to UNTAET to undertake joint patrols, establish joint border posts and exchange military liaison officers. That proposal was unfortunately rejected by UNTAET. For its part, the Indonesian armed forces always barred armed persons from entering East Timor. It has confirmed that it detained the leader of one militia group, who had been organizing a 200-man force for cross-border strikes. But once such armed groups manage to cross the border, UNTAET, being responsible for security in the territory of East Timor, has a clear, robust and unequivocal mandate to take the necessary action to maintain that security. We would certainly welcome the remark by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General that "those who dare to disrupt the public order in the country will pay a very high price" being translated into concrete action, for that is precisely what is expected of UNTAET.

Motivated by a strong desire to resolve the refugee problem, my Government has announced its intention to deal with it in a comprehensive manner within a period of three to six months. That decision was taken so as not to run the risk that international attention to this issue would wane and that the thousands of refugees still in the camps would continue to languish there. We are of the view that if the problem is addressed comprehensively, acts of violence, killings and tension could be significantly abated, if not eradicated altogether.

Essential to this process is the registration of refugees. We acknowledge the role of the United Nations in trying to determine how many people want to remain in Indonesian territory and how many want to return to East Timor. In this respect, the Government of Indonesia is determined to do its utmost to assist and will not allow extremists to get in the way.

For this purpose, a comprehensive plan of action is presently being formulated in order to expedite the resolution of the refugee problem. The elements of the plan would include the following: first, the continuation of existing programmes for repatriation to East Timor or resettlement within Indonesian territory; secondly, the closure of refugee camps closest to the border; thirdly, the relocation to temporary transit camps away from the border of those refugees who choose to remain in Indonesia, prior to their permanent resettlement in West Timor or in other parts of Indonesia; and fourthly, the transfer to transit camps in East Timor of those refugees who choose to return to East Timor, before they are processed for travel to their final destinations in East Timor.

We are also mindful of the economic and financial consequences, because the continued existence of the camps in West Timor has imposed a heavy economic and financial burden not only on the central Government but also on the province of East Nusa Tenggara. This burden has a direct bearing on the local population, who are already impoverished.

Conversely, the return of refugees to East Timor, many of whom are skilled in farming, small business and administration, would be essential for the future development of East Timor.

It must be underlined that the voluntary nature of the decision of each and every individual refugee is sacrosanct throughout the process of registration. The closure of the camps and the relocation of refugees, either to temporary transit camps in West Timor or to transit camps in East Timor, will be carried out in a sensitive and humane manner, preceded by an intensive public information campaign among the refugees.

As we are all aware, such an undertaking requires significant funding. Bearing in mind that the issue of refugees is a collective responsibility, the international community is also being called upon to assist in this process. We hope that, as testimony of the continued concern and commitment of the international community, the necessary assistance will be forthcoming from donor countries and relevant international organizations.

It is understandable that some refugees may have doubts, or even fears, of returning to East Timor due to uncertainties still prevailing. There are approximately 130,000 refugees remaining in camps in West Timor. Their sense of frustration is heightened by the fact that the pace and progress of the much-needed assistance has not met their expectations. Understandably, they are profoundly concerned, especially about their physical security, as well as about employment opportunities and job security, food scarcity and lack of other basic necessities; they see a bleak picture of what the future holds for them in East Timor.

The success of the repatriation process will therefore depend on many aspects, among them the ability of UNTAET to provide certainty, not only in the economic and social fields, but more importantly in the area of security. Having followed closely the developments that are taking place in East Timor, we consider that the most fundamental issue to be addressed as a matter of priority is the attainment of true and genuine reconciliation between and among the East Timorese, which, unfortunately, has so far been elusive.

Lest we forget, it is a historical fact that conflict had already existed between and among the East Timorese even before 1975. That it continues until the present day clearly is not because of Indonesia's design. Violence in the refugee camps not only occurs because of lingering political differences between those who are pro- independence and those who are pro-integration, but it is also committed out of a sense of frustration at living under abnormal circumstances, which has a demoralizing effect.

Undoubtedly, reconciliation is therefore of paramount importance. So long as the root causes remain unsolved, the attainment of a true and genuine reconciliation will continue to elude us and thereby hinder the resolution of this complex and challenging task relating to refugees.

The Government of Indonesia is intent on fostering close and mutually beneficial relations with East Timor and is determined to make its utmost efforts towards this end, including through the urgently necessary task of promoting true and genuine reconciliation among East Timorese of all political persuasions. Accordingly, the Indonesian Attorney General is making final preparations to name those suspected of involvement in the events following last year's popular consultation. This is the culmination of protracted investigations and reflects the firm commitment of the Government to bring to justice the perpetrators of violence. All this is being done within the framework of building a new era of amity and friendship that will benefit the two peoples as the foundation of a bilateral relationship between the two countries.

Many issues, however, remain to be addressed. These include questions of the border, assets, education for East Timorese, archives, creation of a land corridor linking East Timor with the enclave of Oecussi and cultural artefacts. It is in this regard that a delegation from Jakarta recently visited Dili to discuss with UNTAET the issue of the establishment of a Joint Border Committee consisting of civilian representatives from UNTAET and the Indonesian Government to demarcate the boundary between West Timor and East Timor. It is unfortunate that UNTAET has yet to provide comments on the document addressing this issue, which was submitted to it some time ago.

It is therefore imperative that extra efforts from all the concerned parties be made so that the East Timor chapter can finally be brought to a close.

The President: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his kind words addressed to me, as well as to the representative of Jamaica, the Council President for July.

I will now give the floor to Mr. Hédi Annabi to respond to the comments and questions raised.

Mr. Annabi: I will try to respond briefly to some of the main issues that have been raised. There was a question regarding the resignation of Xanana Gusmão at the beginning of the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT) congress. That congress represents the first opportunity for the parties that have joined ranks under the umbrella of the CNRT to debate openly the political future of East Timor. The CNRT was formed in April 1998 to promote independence and to prepare for the popular consultation. During the congress, they have been discussing the reorganization of the CNRT so that it could more adequately address the issues of transition and prepare for independence. So, in some ways, it was normal for the leadership to stand down. The new leadership will, of course, probably be designated at the end of the congress. It is likely that Xanana Gusmão will continue to play a

constructive and central role in the transition process. In fact, he has indicated to the participants during the congress that he would be prepared to continue to play such a role should that be the wish of the rank and file.

We will, of course, as I said in my briefing, revert to and give more details on the proceedings of the congress and on the decisions taken by it, since it is only ending today, and we do not have a detailed report at this point.

There was a question regarding the provision of a military assessment of the security situation in East Timor and its implications for the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). As members of the Council will have noted, I described the current security situation in East Timor at some length during my presentation, as well as UNTAET's concerns in that regard and its assessment of the security threat and the possible motivations behind it. I also described the initial measures taken by UNTAET to restructure the force and to redeploy troops so as to enhance security in the central and western sectors of the territory.

It is in some ways difficult to predict very precisely at this point how the situation will evolve, since of course that evolution is linked fairly closely to the situation in West Timor and militia activities there. But the situation will be kept under review. Once he has received a more detailed assessment from the mission as to what additional measures might be required, the Secretary-General will come back to the Council. As I said, for the time being he has decided that the proposed downsizing of the force in the eastern sector will be delayed in order to enable UNTAET to be better positioned to respond to whatever threats may arise.

There was a question about the investigations into the militia killings of UNTAET personnel. There is a joint investigation underway with Indonesia into the killing of Private Manning, the soldier from the New Zealand contingent who was killed in the border area. However, the investigations regarding the Nepalese soldier and others who were killed well within East Timor are being conducted by UNTAET. We will of course bring the conclusions of those investigations to the Council's attention once they are completed.

I was also asked what measures UNTAET has taken to reintegrate refugees returning in the future. The Special Representative has stated on a number of occasions that there are arrangements in receive large numbers of additional returnees takes place. In fact, the process has so reasonably well. Close to 170,000 East Tim returned from West Timor. Although there some isolated incidents here and there, thos have generally been well received by the pop

In cooperation with the Office of t Nation High Commissioner for Refugees UNTAET is also continuing to facilitate and family visits and what we call "go and se show to potential returnees the prevailing co East Timor and to apprise them of the ar available for their reintegration, should the go back. At this point, of course, the main create conditions that will allow those wis back to exercise that choice in full fr security.

We heard the representative of Indone today the decision of his Government to wo United Nations to resolve the issue of refug Timor. Mr. Vieira de Mello will be visiting the next few days. I am sure he will discussions on this subject with the Government. I hope that some progress can that area so that the return of those who back can take place, and so that the necessa are also taken to curb the activities of the m

I think this covers the main issues ra therefore stop here.

The President: I thank Mr. Anna clarifications and answers he has provided.

There are no further speakers inscri list. The Security Council has thus co present stage of its consideration of the agenda.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.